

Missouri Training and Employment Council ? P.O. Box 1087 ? Jefferson City, MO 65102-1087

Missouri Training and Employment Council Meeting Minutes

April 2, 2004

8:00 – 3:00

Capitol Plaza Hotel

Jefferson City, MO

Attendees: Jerald Pelker, Jane Boyle, Bill Treece, Cheryl Thruston, J.C. Caudle, Ron Randen, Marie Young, John Gaal, Garland Barton, Herb Johnson, Rick Beasley, David Mitchem, David Heath, Lew Chartock, Nancy Headrick, Mary Moore Johnson, Jim Dickerson, Denise Cross, Ajamu Webster, John Wittstruck, Miguel Meneses, Deb Vandevender, Virginia Mee, Elaine West, Brenda Wrench, Mary McKinney, Clinton Flowers, Glenda Terrill.

Chair David Heath opened the meeting with introductions of members, staff and guests. He introduced three new members to MTEC. Deb Vandevender of Trenton, Ajamu Webster of Kansas City, and Nancy Headrick of Jefferson City.

Minutes

Jim Dickerson moved to approve the October 8th, 2003 minutes, Garland Barton 2nd, minutes were approved.

The minutes dated December 1st, 2003 was from the Kansas City meeting had a substantive change that needed to be addressed.

Mary Moore Johnson: On page 5 under the heading “Assisting at Risk Missourians” there was a discussion relative to adding women to the list. I request the minutes reflect the addition of gender.

John Wittstruck moved as amended, Nancy Headrick second, minutes were approved subject to changes.

Local Employment Dynamics

Clinton Flowers

Clinton Flowers reported that he had nothing more to add than what was written in the brief located behind tab 3 of the meeting packet.

Report on the Future of Higher Education

Quentin Wilson

We’re not doing anything in higher education by ourselves. The oldest plan on my office bookshelf is a 1977 “Master Plan 3 for Higher Education.” As I flipped through it so many of the issues were exactly the same ones we are currently talking about. By “we” I mean DESE, Higher Ed, DOLIR, DED, and MTEC. Many of these issues continue, so the real issue for us is how we’re going to implement reform.

Where We Are

I'm going to talk about where we are, where we're headed, and how we plan to get there. Obviously, the where we are and where we're headed are things you've heard before. When we get into how we're going to get there it's clear that the real challenge is figuring out how we can get something done. Missouri has over 400,000 students, 130,000 or so in public four-year institutions, 87,000 in public 2 year institutions, 113,000 in independent institutions, and 65,000 in private career schools.

Measuring Up is a report, issued every two years, from the National Center for Public Policy in Higher Education. According to this report Missouri has improved in the area of preparation. That's important because we can't do anything without better preparation. We have high standards in the K-12 system and we're hoping those standards are not lowered. There is a lot of discussion in the legislature about whether to lower Missouri's math standards. I hope we don't. According to the Measuring Up report the "benefits" score has dropped for Missouri. This means that even if you get a four-year degree in Missouri, it doesn't have the same economic benefit as it does nationally. So we're making the case that higher education is beneficial and we've partnering with economic development to improve the benefits of a degree.

About 39 of 100 ninth graders graduate from high school, go directly to college, return their second year, and graduate with a degree within 150% of program time. That's about the national average but nowhere near the best performing states. Missouri is somewhere in the middle. One hundred fifty percent of the program time means 3 years for a two-year program or 6 years for a 4-year degree. We're right at the U.S. average as far as percentage of the population with a bachelor's degree. For the states in the Midwest Higher Education Compact we're tied with Arkansas for lowest in terms of the percentage of ninth graders that enter college. We have a regional differentiation. I think regional assessments have to be considered.

In the area of higher education funding gap, compared to the best performing states, Missouri is about 180 million dollars short when you look at investment per student. When you look at the best performing neighboring states that has similar higher education systems it looks like a 458 million dollar short fall and when you just look at all the neighboring states we're about 460 million dollar short fall.

David Heath: We're going to send you an invitation for our next meeting which is in Kansas City in June and we'd like to see a 45-60 minute presentation just on the issue of financing. The Council needs to understand more specifically all of these various income streams and how they combine to complete this profile.

I'd be glad to that.

Where We Are Going

Our vision is to be a national leader in Higher Education quality and performance. However, currently, Missouri falls short in the category of median earnings by degree levels. I think that is an economic development issue that we really need to work on together. Individuals want their own children to go to college. Missouri supports education at all levels. But I don't think people realize that educational attainment even by other people's kids helps increase the whole state's performance. I'm surprised there isn't better data about education as an economic development strategy. A 1% increase in degree attainment would add about 2.5 billion dollars to Missouri's economy. That means increased degree attainment benefits everyone, not just those who go to college. Missouri's rank is 36 among the states because some of the bigger states have a higher performance level. If we just went up to being the 25th state there would be a 4.69 billion dollar increase in the economy. It doesn't just benefit the individual it benefits everybody.

How We Are Going to Get There

As you go back over the past twenty-five years, almost every report on the status of Missouri's education system has looked at the same things. The issue of core curriculum is not an easy issue. It will require agreement among the various interests. Teacher quality must become a priority. Also, we don't do a very good job of connecting our workforce and employer needs. We do pretty well at customized training and issues that meet immediate needs, but I don't think we do a very good job of communicating what careers are out there. We have to do a better job of informing students and the public about career opportunities.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding teacher quality.

Participation Issues. Participation is about redefining the role of community colleges. Missouri doesn't have a comprehensive system of community colleges. There are a lot of gaps. In southeast Missouri, Southeast Missouri State University and Three Rivers Community College are partnering up to establish higher education centers in small towns and offer programs. Community college programs must be integrated with both K-12 and four-year institutions.

Financial Aid. Missouri's financial aid is inadequate, about 50 million dollars short. It's also difficult to access the aid. Filling out the FAFSA for kids going to college is difficult. It's worse than any tax form I ever saw and I was director of revenue so I know about tax forms.

Performance Excellence. When it comes to performance excellence and quality; the big issue is collaboration. Engaging the business community to determine the needs of employers is vital. Employers want vocational or academically trained employees be able to solve problems, communicate and be critical thinkers. To this end, measuring value-added learning is the only strategy that will move us toward the issue of quality of instruction.

We discussed our priorities with the legislature. Everybody we've ever asked to look at this has come up with things that are fairly similar about core curriculum, student preparation, teacher quality, financial aid, quality and performance, workforce employer needs. A couple of issues that didn't show up as often, but are equally important, are awareness/public support, engaging the business community, access and completion. Access and completion are critical to success. Implementation has to be our focus. We need to take the kind of information found in the State of the Workforce report, prioritize it, and work on it together and build a consensus.

David Heath: I'm looking at the report of the Commission on the Future of Higher Ed and I have a couple of questions. What is the actual status of that document? Has it been adopted?

The document was issued at the end of December and the commission approved it. We're taking it one recommendation at a time, trying to implement it, and issuing quarterly reports regarding the status.

David Heath: One of the primary goals of this report is the creation of a task force. From listening to your remarks I gather that is not the way you want to go now?

I would actually like to go that way but I don't know that it's going to be done this year, given the legislative issues and this being an election year. I do think we can informally begin that process.

David Heath: I raise that issue because this report plus MTEC's report on the State of Missouri's Workforce came out at or about the same time. I don't know how much behind the scenes collaboration there was, but these reports are driven off the same data sets around educational attainment and the recommendations, your ten and our eleven, are remarkably consistent. I can say on behalf of MTEC that during the next year or so we're

going to be all about moving out through the various members and subcommittees to do precisely what you suggested. We will be driving to implementation the various recommendations.

Task Force on the High School

Kent King

Thank you for the opportunity to visit with you about the topic of a prepared workforce and the role that elementary and secondary education plays. We have formed a high school task force to assess the need for reform. The characteristics of today's high schools (the set of classrooms, approximate number of students in each classroom, teaching style and seven period day) is probably not dramatically different than when you went to high school. We have to look seriously at what a high school should look like in the 21st Century and determine if reforms are needed. We're going to charge this task force with two or three general things. One is what kind of high school do we need so all kids can be successful? Two is what would a high school look like when all kids are proficient?

We have been tasked by the U.S. Congress to have all kids proficient by 2014. If we do that what does a high school look like? I contend it's a dramatically different looking institution than we currently have. The third piece is how do we ensure that graduates are truly prepared to enter the adult world. Let me say up front that a piece of that will be high school graduation requirements. My belief about high school graduation requirements has very little to do with the number of courses we're talking about. It has a whole lot to do with the rigor of the courses.

Do our kids come to school? In the past ten years, Missouri has shown a little progress on average daily attendance. Think about who the kids that aren't coming are. When you improve the attendance of the kids that are hardest to get to school it has a greater educational impact. Let's talk about the dropout rate for just a minute. Currently, Missouri has a dropout rate of 3.5% annually for students 9 thru 12. The dropout has been cut by almost half since 1993. The more important part of that picture, in my view, is the reducing of the gap between students of color and all kids. We've had a significant reduction in the dropout rate of minority kids in the last ten years. I think that is a significant step if you're going to make a difference. We can't educate kids if they are not in school.

Ajamu Webster: What is the definition of a dropout and has the definition changed in the last ten years?

The definition has not changed in the last ten years. The working definition is "beginning enrollment plus students that transfer in minus students who transfer out minus graduates and the difference is dropouts."

Ajamu Webster: So if a student leaves school and gets a GED that is still considered a dropout.

If they drop out of high school and then take the GED they are considered a dropout. If they are in a GED option program, which is a program students can take and work toward a GED in high school they are not consider a dropout. We don't have very many of those kids but we do have a few.

The percent of 18 year olds with high school diplomas or GED has continued to increase over the past several years. Right now it has leveled off at 89%. Where do the kids go? From 1993 to 2003, there is an increasing trend for kids to attend two-year colleges. Vocational technical has held steady. Employment went down last year. I expect the economy dictated that. I want to talk about the two-year college piece just a minute. I think one of the programs that have contributed to a rise in two-year college enrollment is the A+ program. We have a significant number of kids who qualify and use A+. That may be part of the reason for a slight decline, at least not an increase, in the four-year colleges. I would argue that another reason community college

enrollment has gone up is because of increased tuition at four-year colleges. More than anything else that has been instituted recently, the A+ program has enabled more kids to advance to higher education in Missouri.

Let's move on to ACTs. About 69% of our graduates take the ACTs. On the scores themselves there is one I'm proud of and one I'm concerned about. I'm pleased to see we're doing well in reading. Mathematics on the other hand is a concern. That's our lowest ACT composite score we barely beat the nation. The composite score has declined over that last five years. ACT provides an analysis of student scores for those kids who do take the core subjects and those who don't. ACT says core subjects are 4 years of English, 3 years of math, 3 years of social studies, 3 years of science. Eighty-four percent of the ACT takers in Missouri complete four or more years of English, which represents about 75% of the kids. Math is at 84%; Social Sciences are 86% and Science is 69%. There's a compounding problem on the science scores. The availability of qualified science teachers, particularly in rural schools, makes it tough for them to offer the kind of courses the kids need to take let alone get kids to take them. For example, rural Missouri towns do not have sufficient demand for a full-time physics teacher.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the national test for assessing students. The federal folks in each state administer the NAEP on a random basis. They randomly select buildings; they randomly select classrooms so Miss Jones at Bloomfield Elementary School, who teaches fourth grade, may administer the fourth grade reading test and nobody else in Southeast Missouri administered the test. This is not a vehicle that compares Jefferson City High School to Columbia Hickman High School. However, it can tell us how Missouri compares to other states. This test is given every other year and our biggest gains have been over the past few years. I wish the proficiency levels were higher but there have been some pretty significant gains. I attribute that to some of the high standards and the assessments we've used. How does Missouri compare to the nation? Fourth grade reading in 2003 in the nation 30% of the kids were proficient; Missouri had 34%. Fourth grade mathematics, we were one point below the nation with a proficiency level on our MAP test of 37%. We have work to do on mathematics. One of the issues the state board has is a tremendous amount of pressure to lower our standards. Often, when a school is at risk of being designate unaccredited or deficient in some way, DESE gets considerable pressure not to hold them accountable.

College readiness as measured by high school exams. The University of Oregon did a study and looked at assessment programs and how they measure what students need to know to succeed in college. Our MAP test was determined to be one of two in the nation that measures best what kids need to know to succeed in college. The reason I mention that is I think there is a vehicle that we have in place called the MAP test that can contribute to colleges looking at those scores to help them in determining whether kids are ready to succeed in college or not. I also believe that a recent study by Michael Podgursky where he analyzed the relationship between ACT and MAP and found a high correlation of predictability from MAP on college success. Part of the reason I bring that up is I think that one of the places we have an opportunity to make a difference in kids taking those tests seriously is if we can get colleges to use them in how they admit kids.

An issue that's been around DESE for a long time and we can't seem to get a lot of traction on is getting employers to look at high school transcripts before employment. We believe it would significantly change the way they look at their applicants and it would significantly change students' attitudes toward what they should have on that transcript. It's not rocket science but it does send a message to kids that the transcript is important.

In your report there is a little slide on the fourth page that talks about money. If you will look at it you will notice that the percentage of revenues school districts are using to educate their kids is growing at the local level and decreasing at the state level. If we're really going to educate all kids then the equity piece has to be addressed to a greater degree than simply letting local people decide only to educate theirs. Equity is an issue for every citizen in this state and we need to get that resolved if we're going to prepare a statewide workforce.

David Heath: We have a couple of items that need to be addressed before we move to the next agenda item. Nancy Headrick would like to speak to us regarding incentive money.

Nancy Headrick: Federal legislation requires that if WIA Title I/WIA Title II, which is adult education and literacy and that Carl D. Perkins vocational technical education act, if all three of those programs meet the agreed to levels of performance the state is entitled to incentive funds. All three programs for fiscal year 2003 met the agreed to levels of performance. What John is passing out to you is a copy of what has been the procedure and the criteria for the grant in previous years. Staff has learned it will be similar for this coming year. We have not received official notification. Usually you're notified then you have 45 days to get the grant proposal written, approved by Commissioner King, Director Simmons and the Governor. That could take us longer than 45 days. On the bottom of this handout you will see the criteria we are supposed to include – we are supposed to work collaboratively on initiatives. What I would like to suggest to the Council is that the Education and Training Committee be the group that provides guidance to Rick Beasley and me. We believe we need to identify what can be done that will help all of the groups who helped us receive the funding. There may be activities in which each of the specific areas we may want to address as well. We would like to hear any thoughts so we can have a good proposal and not wait until we get the official notification.

David Heath: We have between \$750,000 and \$3,000,000 in play in the form of a grant that we facially qualify for. What, if anything, does the Council at large need to do to help perfect the process?

If the Council wants to say Rick and me – go ahead and work with the education and training committee. If they have any particular thoughts on how to use the funds but we do need to bring the application back to the Council and give us it's blessing before we submit it.

David Heath: Is it the sense of this body that we should attempt to attain these funds? Any discussion?

Lew Chartock: I think we're in very good hands with Dr. Headrick and Mr. Beasley. I think we should let them run with it.

This is a great way to carry out some of the recommendations in the state of the workforce report.

David Heath: The Council then directs you to move forward to finalize this process as proposed by Dr. Headrick. No motion needed.

Next issue – we're going to recognize as a group in the form of resolutions five previous members for their time and energies directed toward MTEC and for their achievements. I'll read one of the resolutions and then we'll name the individuals and hopefully we can have unanimous consent to passing these resolutions. The individuals that we wish to honor include: Patti Penny, Joe Driskill, Ben Uchitelle, and Ron Vessell. Is there a motion before the body? Jim Dickerson/motion, John Wittstruck/second, motion was passed unanimously.

Elaine West will speak to us for a few minutes regarding her Service Integration Support for working poor families.

Elaine West: This report was prepared for our community action staff because we are working on integration of our services. We are trying to integrate program services across the board. I thought it was very fitting for the Council to have copies of it because it relates to the State of Missouri's Workforce report. The importance of integration of services is highlighted on page 7 of our report. We interviewed case managers from community

action agencies to determine what is needed for people that are working and what has helped them keep their job. All low-income people going into a job need stability and many times they need emergency assistance. It could be food, clothing, or transportation. You will see that to stay in the job and advance they need higher education. If you look at this middle group, we found that all working low-income people need emergency assistance. Housing, childcare, health insurance, medical care and transportation are the vital things that concern us right now. People in Missouri are going to work but what we have are people going to work at entry-level jobs that do not pay enough for people to meet all of their basic needs. To keep them in a job and help them to advance we found that these are very important features that need to be considered.

David Heath: Please turn to tab 7 of your book. At the December meeting in KC at the request of the body I created a Workforce Investment Board Committee as an ad hoc committee. Consistent with our needs we are now moving as a group to amend the MTEC By-laws to bring the WIB committee in as a standing committee. To do that, direct your attention to page 5 of that tab which deals with Article 7. Upon appropriate vote you would expand the executive committee to consist of 13 members and six standing committees. You can read the specific language on page 7. It's been moved and seconded that the by-laws be amended to create a full standing committee status for the MTEC WIB Committee. Any discussion?

David Mitchem: Just so we're clear, it is the intent of the By-laws amendment that the local Workforce Investment Board Chairs participate as members of the WIB Committee. The wording throughout the by-laws identifies MTEC members as members of particular committees. None of that wording addresses outside members of the committees.

John Wittstruck: In the second paragraph the word counseling MTEC. Can I infer that to mean advising MTEC?

David Heath: Correct.

Mary Moore Johnson/motion, Garland Barton/second, passed unanimously

Communication and Marketing Committee

Jim Dickerson

MTEC members are engaging business groups around the state in the form of chambers of commerce. We have called on a number of current and former MTEC members to help us where we have reason to believe they are already acquainted with people in specific chambers. However, one thing we do need to do is get constant feedback so we are aware of the questions and reactions to the State of Missouri's Workforce report. We want to anticipate where the challenges are. A list of questions and possible answers for presenters to review would be a big help to those making presentations.

David Mitchem: Staff is in the process of putting a list of asked questions together. We will also incorporate suggested answers to those questions so we have a standardized response. Since the list of questions may grow we will disseminate the list on an ongoing basis, we may even put it on the website.

Education and Training Committee

John Gaal

Even though the Education and Training Committee has not met since November we have been working. This month alone presentations on the State of the Workforce Report will be made to the following boards: Missouri Community College Association, DESE and the Coordinating Board for Higher Education. I plan to participate in a couple of those presentations. Each one of these boards has MTEC members that are integral to the respective organizations so we should have friends already sitting at the table. If you will remember, as our

December meeting concluded we moved to change Missouri's graduation requirements from 3-2-2-2 up to 4-3-3-3. Trying to instill this rigor seems to be controversial.

It's my understanding that Dr. Headrick, with the help of Mr. Beasley, is going to move forward with the incentive grant. I think Dr. Chartock was right on the money when he suggested we hand it over to the pros and let them form a framework and then at the April 30th education and training committee meeting we can give them some meaningful input.

WIB Chair Committee

Garland Barton

Prior to the development of the workforce investment boards the private industry councils (PIC) had a formalized network and had a channel for input. When we converted from the PICs to the WIBs that channel went away. When the WIB chairs got together at the Governor's Conference and were asked about their desire to participate as an input device to the Council, they were very receptive to the idea. It was obvious from the interaction that there hadn't been any linkage between the different regions WIB chairs. Rick has been having meetings with the directors and I think those are very effective but there hadn't been any meetings with the chairs of the region and any official of the state. At the December 1st meeting of the Council, the chairs were established as an ad hoc committee with a view towards establishing them as a standing committee. We can capitalize on sharing great ideas through this more formal relationship.

David Heath: On page 7 under tab 7, which you adopted this morning, is the language for the creation for the WIB Chair committee. Under the second paragraph there are some extraordinarily important items that you are responsible for, not the least of which is the last one. "A development of effective working partnerships with other regional and community based organizations" because if we don't integrate ourselves, along with the educational institutions, with these regional and community based organizations my view is that we are not going to be as successful as we could be. We leave it to your good graces to help drive these outcomes through this committee. WIB chairs, do have any comments about what has been said in the last five minutes?

Jim Houchen: I think this is an important beginning. I applaud the step forward in getting us all together and I think it will pay great dividends in the future.

David Heath: Do you think it would be practical to have MTEC meetings in conjunction with WIB activities at WIB sites?

Jim Houchen: It would be helpful at the local board level so they can get a sense of what's happening in the state and what's driving the system. We try to take it back to the board but there is no better vehicle for letting people know what's going on than to be able to participate.

John Wittstruck: Do I understand section two on page seven following the amended language that WIB chairs are eligible for appointment to other standing committees of MTEC?

David Heath: I don't know if that has ever been discussed.

John Wittstruck: Maybe this is something that the chair, vice-chair and David should take under advisement.

David Heath: My personal feeling is that I would like to get the WIBs as actively involved in as many committees and activities as possible.

DWD Mystery Shopper

Rick Beasley

Our division sent out an RFP to get bids on a Mystery Shopper program to evaluate Missouri Career Centers. We're excited about it because it will evaluate our good work and will also allow us to assess ourselves for improvements. This program is not an "I got you" it's more about continuous improvement. We are starting with a one-year contract but it will be an ongoing process.

Regional Performance

Rick Beasley

Behind tab 9 is a scorecard identifying the programs the Division of Workforce Development measures. We have given you a snapshot of our second quarter for all the programs. The Division rolls these up into a list of nine critical elements that we focus on. This scorecard assesses the various programs allowing me to see what is going on and then discuss with my managers what they are going to put in place to improve the process when we are below our target. We're trying to be more proactive than reactive.

Lew Chartock: Who sets the targets?

The targets are based on historical data and then we project out what we think we can achieve.

Behind tab 10 you have the second quarter of our statewide performance. Identified are the negotiated levels of performance (targets) and the actual levels of performance. If you look in the program area that says 99%, we have to get that above 100% or it is perceived by the U.S. Dept. of Labor as failing, even though the 17 performance measures were exceeded. Right now we are right on target, we have two more quarters to go and I think we should be OK.

I'm going to turn it over to Jack Guthrie. I want the Council to know that we have a new job bank coming on line. Missouri Works is being phased out. Jack Guthrie and Mike Waltman were co-chairs of a team to design Great Hires. Our goal is to be better than Monster.com. Another initiative is that we've asked Missouri Enterprise to assess the Missouri Career Center processes to ensure we have the right processes in place and to evaluate where we need to make changes and modifications.

Great Hires

Jack Guthrie/Rick Beasley

Jack Guthrie presented a power point presentation highlighting the Great Hires enhancements.

- Search-ability by college major/field of study
- 'Upload current resume' feature
- Email notification of matched job openings
- Post-referral status indicators
- Employer access to job orders put in the system on their behalf by Career Center Staff
- Three levels of employer control over job orders—Matches restricted to only those who are qualified
- Employers can conveniently contact job seekers with Automatic Message feature

"We've known for a long time that Missouri Works had some problems. The matching piece needed to be improved and communication between staff and employers needed improvement."

Jack pointed out that the matching part in Tool Box would be the same matching piece that the employers as well as the applicants are using. There will also be a link on the home page to Local Employment Dynamics information, enabling employers and job seekers to find labor market information. Social security numbers will

no longer be used as a sign on since many people are no longer comfortable with that. There is also a link to employment security, one of our main partners. "There are a lot of individuals looking for employment who are drawing unemployment assistance plus many of our employers need this information."

Jack gave a brief explanation of O-Net. The matching piece of Great Hires is primarily based on the O-Net. The *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* was used for many years as our classification system but a new classification system was needed, one that was a little more expansive in identifying occupations as well as identifying the skills that go with those occupations and the training that is needed. They came up with O-Net. We've also built in a Missouri piece so that job seekers and employers can put in skill words that are unique to that particular occupation. Jack walked us through the process as a job seeker and then as an employer.

Bill Treece: Is it password protected?

Yes. Each individual creates his or her own password to gain access to the system.

Miguel Meneses: Does the person have to register with the career center prior to utilizing the service? Secondly, with all the downsizing going on in Kansas City a lot of individuals know in advance that they are going to be downsized, will they be able to use this service that far in advance.

Rick Beasley: Yes. The beauty of it is that it is like any job bank system only there is no cost to the employer or job seeker. Once this goes live on June 1 you can go home and register yourself or you can go to a career center.

John Wittstruck: In the material that Dr. King presented he shows 20% of high school graduates go directly to work. Are you communicating Great Hires through the high school counselors or some other organization so that students getting ready to graduate will be aware of it?

Rick Beasley: We are going to have a marketing campaign. Our goal is to be able to market it to high schools, and community colleges.

John Wittstruck: This committee and others has selected Work Keys as an assessment of choice to assess skill sets. Do you have the Work Keys scales on both sides of this?

Rick Beasley: No. However, it could be one of our enhancements

Ron Randen: Is there a way a community college in a region can look at what is missing as far as skill sets and they could set up their program to get that skill set.

Rick Beasley: We've been working with Marty Romitti and his group looking at these crosswalks. One of the things we want to identify when there are layoffs are the skill sets and make a crosswalk to occupations that are projected for growth in that region. It enables us to work with those colleges to re-design their curriculum so we can get folks into an occupation quicker. We're going to be doing some very creative things with this. We've tied it into our case management system so that it's easier for the staff. It's one of the critical pieces we maybe haven't emphasized. Under Missouri Works the employers have a different matching system, the job seekers have a different matching system and our staff had a different matching system. Great Hires enables us to have a better matching component. We look at this as a tool to enhance our capabilities. Will it be a perfect system? No it won't, but we are always going to look for ways to improve.

John Wittstruck: In building an operational transactional system like this sometimes you fail to build in the kinds of things that allow you to do research about the quality of the workforce. I hope that those that are building that are keeping that in mind because clearly the kind of skill sets that are being asked for, the skill sets that people are reporting, will be a key component to future state of the workforce reports with regard to the quality of educational attainment. My question is: if qualified do I have to be a one hundred percent match on what the employer asks for or is it 80% match? For example if they want two years of experience as a short order cook and I have three years of experience will the fact that I said three kick me out?

Rick Beasley: The person who has more experience will be matched on that job order but we did want to put in there the control to the employer that if he wanted three years of experience the person with two years experience will not see that job order. However, if the employer was willing to look at the people with two years experience we left the employer that ability to do that.

John Wittstruck: Have you had your lawyers look at your decision rules in this? You might be approaching some real legal issues over the fact that you may have to have the employer forced into looking at everybody whether or not they meet 100%.

Mary Johnson: I have a question regarding the people who are not computer literate or don't even have a computer. What plans do you have in place to reach out and bring those people into this program?

Rick Beasley: Most of the folks who are not computer literate will go to a career center where our staff will assist them.

WIB Reports

Central Region

Jim Dickerson

The central region has nineteen counties making it the largest geographic region in the state and we probably rank third or fourth in population. Our region has seven career centers located in Mexico, Columbia, Jefferson City, Camdenton, Lebanon, Rolla and Fort Leonard Wood. Roughly 10,000 people a month go through the career centers. Right now two of our career centers, (Camdenton and Columbia) along with a career center in Baltimore Maryland, are participating in a study that the Dept. of Labor has funded. We are pleased to have been selected since this is a study to determine best practices.

Our board is composed of 38 members two from each county. One of the challenges we face is distance. Depending on where we meet some of our board members have to drive two hours to get to a meeting because the region is so large. You have to keep a high level of interest if you're going to have an active board. As a result of that type of activity we were studied last year regarding participation. They studied how we actually get the participation in the region. The WIB holds three employer forums every year, one in each of the sub-regions. All of the members of the chamber of commerce in that part of the region are invited to come in and have lunch with the board members and me and have an employer discussion. Anything can be laid out on the table. We're interested in knowing how many of them are using our career centers, if they aren't using them why not and things we might do to better serve the employer. We traditionally have a very high turn out. Last year we started something new. It's the same type of regional meeting with our educators. We found that the schools don't even talk among themselves. Our meetings actually helped facilitate communication among the educational institutions. One of the things the board brings to the table, that we sometimes overlook, is the business type flavor. I've always said the boards got a job and staff has a job. We're proud of the region.

South Central Region

Garland Barton/Tana Holder

Garland Barton: South Central Region is comprised of 12 counties from Poplar Bluff to Mountain Grove. We have two full service career centers within the region one in Poplar Bluff and one in West Plains. Those two locations are also the highest populated, highest employee locations of the region. Approximately 38,000 customers visited the sites last year, 100,000 telephoned the full service sites. I have chaired the WIB in that region since it was created in 1998. Prior to that, I chaired the private industry council for a number of years. In addition to chairing the WIB, I now chair the chairs of the WIB, sit on this council, sit on the executive one-stop committee, the Missouri Employer committee and numerous school and college curriculum development councils. We recently incorporated as a 501C (3) organization. I'm proud of everybody at South Central. Tana Holder does an excellent job.

Tana Holder: There are three WIB directors in the room and I want to take the opportunity to say thank you to Becky Steele, Mac McGinnis and Jan Vaughn. When I got this job I didn't know the difference between a WIB and a spider web and these three directors took me by the hand and kept me going.

We have 29 members on our board and of course you know that 51% has to be private sector. There aren't a lot of factories in our region but we do have a lot of mom and pop stores. These fifteen wonderful people literally closed their doors and come to the WIB meetings. All they get is cookies and lemonade and I'm just constantly amazed at their dedication. Our meetings are informal and acronym free, I want a six year old to be able to understand what we are talking about. Things don't have to be complicated to be effective.

The state mandated us to have a business outreach plan so our business representative and community members came together and we not only have it done we have it approved by the board and have begun training the staff on how to put it into tool box. We have training to make sure that staff knows everything there is to offer to an employer. So when they're talking to that employer they can say, and by the way would you be interested in knowing about this other program too?

Ms. Holder also spoke about receiving \$100,000, through the hard work of staff and all the people that work with the CAP program, from Rick Beasley through a competition he initiated. She spoke of Bernie, a gentleman hired with \$25,000 from the state for the youth council, and how he has been a shot in the arm.

The second annual Garland Barton Special Achievement Award was also discussed. Candidates are chosen for the exemplary progress in their programs. Tana felt it was a wonderful way for a community to really begin to know what we do but the best thing that I see that comes out of it is the pride of the staff and the case managers. We have two program operators; one serves the six eastern counties and one serves the six western counties. So we have two award ceremonies; one in West Plains and one in Poplar Bluff.

Tana closed by thanking the Council for their hard work.

West Central Region

Jim Houchen

On behalf of the West Central Board we'd like to thank you for the opportunity to present to MTEC. The workforce development board of West Central Missouri is comprised of 13 counties covering 9,052 square miles. It covers the northern part of Chariton County down into St. Clair and Cedar counties. Our board consists of 32 members, 17 are private sector members. We are a 501C(3) not-for-profit corporation, we were incorporated in 1984 and our administrative offices are located in Sedalia, MO in Pettis County. We have three full service career centers and three affiliates. The average travel time to any one center does not exceed thirty-five miles. We tried to strategically lay those out to minimize that.

Some of our accomplishments. We succeeded in receiving a national emergency disaster grant for the tornado that struck in Stockton last year. It was a 1.8 million dollar U.S. Dept. of Labor (USDOL) grant. That grant expires this year but we've applied for an extension. This grant has presently served 90 people and there is still a big need there. We also received a national emergency grant for plant closures. We had 1,150 workers affected in our area by plant closures. We received a 1.3 million dollar USDOL grant. Some of the companies that closed that created the need for this grant was Excel Meat in Marshall, MO and Rival Mfg. in Clinton, Sedalia and Sweet Springs, MO, the Honeywell closures in Nevada. Over fifty percent of those 1,150 workers received intensive services, 179 are still receiving training services and that grant ends June 30.

We also were successful to receive a USDOL H1B grant. That grant is 2.8 million dollars but when you add in the matching contributions of the people that were working with us on that grant it ends up being an 8.8 million dollar initiative that we've got going. In that grant there are four initiatives that we are going to target and the grant itself is to increase the number of mental health professionals in the rural West Central Missouri area. One of the figures we've heard while working on this is if an individual is in need of services from the mental health community their wait from the time they were diagnosed is 13 weeks. That's terrible. Hopefully this grant with its four initiatives is going to address some of those problems. Initiative one is a psychiatric residency fellowship. Initiative two is advanced nurse training in the area of psychiatric and mental health. Initiative three is a psychology residency and internship. Initiative four is the training of general practitioners and nurse practitioners in the area of psychiatric and mental health. That will be a first in the entire country. That initiative is to go out and find general practitioners and nurse practitioners that will receive training to be able to diagnose and treat those needs. There has been a tremendous amount of interest and feedback in that. We think this will have a major impact on our area and it could be at some point in time a national model for some of the things that need to be done in this area.

In January there was an employer expo held in Nevada. Nevada was fortunate enough to have six new employers move into the area. It was decided instead of having a job fair there would be an employer expo. At this expo they introduced six new employers to the area, which represented approximately one thousand jobs. They had 1800 job seekers attend that expo. It led to opportunities for on the job training and direct job placement. The nice thing about it was the way the career centers managed the applications and screening process for all six of those corporations. Maybe other regions could move from job fairs to employer expos and be successful with that approach.

One of the things we're extremely proud of is our career assistance program funded through TANF. We have approximately 1,200 clients in our 13 counties. We've had to go out and do quite a bit of hiring and our key to success has been to hire the right people. Our staff and partners have done an excellent job. The theme was train, train, and train these people. We've encouraged these people to think outside the box. Sixty-eight percent of the staff has less than one-month job experience at this point but have done an excellent job. Through their efforts and the training, our group has met the performance expectations for the 65% engagement by April 1. We're one of five regions in the state that met their performance and qualified for the incentive bonus. We can thank Mac for that; his continued leadership has paid off. We think we have some strengths in our region that involve having an informed board, utilizing our strategic planning, the outside grants have made a tremendous difference in our ability to deliver services, we re-structured the staff and put them in a more productive and creative environment, we've been able to deliver effective training, we've done a good job with the private sector. We have a plan for tomorrow. We have a gentlemen in our region that has a vision; Mac McGinnis. Through Mac's vision there are a lot of things that have happened over the last few years. One of his visions is that we develop a training center in our area and I would like for Mac to tell you a little about that.

Mac McGinnis: One of the things we're doing a lot of work on is a center where we believe we will be able to meet the skills gaps that are being identified. We are going to have to assist education with providing the center where we can do short-term training. We know the successes we've had is built around training. We also know that we're enrolling more people in welding, and cosmetology. We have people asking for types of industry training such as blueprint reading, or how to read a tape for a construction job. Schools aren't really geared up to do that. They can send you an instructor on a contract basis but they don't have a class that will only do that for you. Industry is telling us that is what they need. We knew we would need partnerships with a lot of people including education to be able to put this together. We started searching for a facility that had to be centrally located. We have found a facility that is owned by a corporation that has managed to put together a package for us that is very attractive. This building is less than twenty years old, 18,000 square feet, it was a research and development building for a large corporation, so we can do any kind of vocational training and/or training seminars of our own. A director and a full-time support person will staff this training center. We've got agreements made with a number of educational people to work with us on a contract basis to bring in the training that we need. I think we will have a pilot program here in the state of Missouri that could look very good. We anticipate that we will do thousands of dollars of training in that facility under a contract basis with education doing the training and we will act as brokers for the services. It is a large undertaking but I think you will hear a lot more about it. We have our alliances put together, we have our partnerships put together and I think we should be up and going in sixty days.

Ozark Region

Dianna Devore/Jaydean Miller

Dianna Devore: My name is Dianna Devore and I'm the incoming chair for the WIB in Springfield for the Ozark Region. We serve a seven county region. Christian county is the fastest growing county in Missouri; Taney County is the third fastest growing county. Some of the things we had difficulty with was attracting and retaining business people to serve on the WIB. Some of the frustration among business people that got involved was the fact that we didn't have a lot of support with the other community leaders such as chambers of commerce, technical colleges, other economic development forces that were in the communities as well as businesses. We've focused on getting involved with business people and in getting the community and the WIB to coordinate efforts. Our specific goals are to shift our focus to employers as our customers. We have been working with businesses through human resource associations. We're trying to develop an elevator speech that anyone can give at any time to the local organizations. Many times they don't know what WIB is when you walk into the room so we're increasing the awareness of what WIB is and what we do and who we're there to serve. We have developed brochures that go over the services that are offered at the Missouri Career Centers and also increase the knowledge among the outlying communities of where the services are offered in their specific county. There are a lot of rural areas outside of Springfield and a lot of people who just didn't know where to go.

Some of our strengths are the fact that a lot of our employers use Missouri Works but they don't necessarily use the rest of the services that are offered. I was excited to see how the Great Hires web site will track some of those things. Also, greater partner and community participation was 2nd goal. We're pleased that we do have participation from the Southwest Area Manufacturers Association, the local chambers of commerce, a representative specifically from their economic development force, as well as, community college leaders and a better representation from our business community at the meeting. We've also scheduled an educational summit in May where the school superintendents will be attending from the communities as well as the local chambers and economic development committees, business and community leaders and the WIB. Our purpose will be to develop some action plans to approve our workforce readiness skills through either customized training through OTC or through the Career Center based on the needs of the community. OTC has been really good about developing customized training for employers.

I would now like to introduce Jaydean Miller who is with me today. She is a WIA provider staff member for the Ozark Region in Springfield. She has been with the staff for seven and one-half years and has been a big help to me.

Jaydean Miller: One of the other goals that the WIB put together when they did the strategic plan has to do with funding. They wanted to get to a place where we, our region as a whole, are not so dependent on federal and state dollars to do what we do. We aren't there yet. We haven't quite addressed it. We know it has to do with partnering, we know the direction we need to go but I think we have gotten sidetracked with other things. The business and education emphasis has used up a lot of our WIB meeting and WIB committee time. We are jumping into education by having Clinton Flowers come to our next WIB meeting and share the recommendations with our WIB. We're looking at education and appropriate placement. We're excited about Great Hires for that reason. I'll be honest the whole idea of Great Hires coming aboard was very upsetting because it's another name change but it does look like a very improved product.

To tell you a little about what we've done. Two days ago our business representative, our state counterpart and myself put together a focus group. We had 21 businesses represented in that focus group that came in to look at Great Hires and they were excited. Last but not least, marketing and promotions is another area that our WIB wanted to work on. They didn't just want to market the Missouri Career Center because we have 2500 people walking through our door every week. We have customers but we needed to market to the businesses and we wanted to improve the number of businesses that are using our services. We have started down that road by creating a CD that we are sending out to all our businesses. We are sending these CDs out in packets to our businesses. We were lucky to be involved in a pilot project and do a lot more advertising to businesses. Thank you.

John Wittstruck: I was pleased with Dianne's comments about Ozark's Technical Community College working with them in developing short term as needed programs but one of the things we have appreciated knowing from all the WIB chairs is the extent to which our colleges and universities in the state are active and engaged with the local WIBs. If there are problems please let us know because I'm sure Commissioner Wilson would be delighted to have a conversation with the presidents about why they aren't more active with these local WIBs.

David Heath: There has been an opening for the head of the strategic planning committee of MTEC. We were able to persuade Mary Johnson to take over the chairmanship of that committee. She will be in contact soon with the members of that committee. Also, for those of you who are new members or are existing members and would like to join that committee let us know. Any other comments?

David Mitchem: I've handed out the most current copy of the State of Missouri's Workforce Executive Summary. While the Council finished its work in December, the report was not released until after the Governor's state of the state address in January. So we have modified the date on the report to 2004.

Meeting adjourned.